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General Instructions for Filling Out California Natural Diversity Database Field Survey Forms

The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) is the largest, most comprehensive database of its type in the world. It presently contains over 40,000 site specific records on California's rarest plants, animals, and natural communities. The majority of the data collection effort for this has been provided by an exceptional assemblage of biologists throughout the state and the west. The backbone of this effort is the field survey form.

Although the future lies in the digitally submissible field form and map, this system is not yet in place. Enclosed are copies of CNDDDB paper field survey forms for species and natural communities. The CNDDDB would appreciate your field observations on rare, threatened, endangered, or sensitive species and natural communities (elements) submitted to us on these forms.

To determine what species and natural communities are of concern to us, refer to our free publications for lists of which elements these include: *Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List*, *Special Animals List*, and *Natural Communities List*. Reports on multiple visits to sites that already exist in the CNDDDB are as important as new site information as it helps us track trends in population/stand size and condition. Naturally, new site information is also welcomed.

Enclosed is an example of a field survey form that includes the information we like to see. Note that you may either submit a copied portion of a USGS topographic quad map with the population/stand outlined or marked (see back of enclosed example), or provide a set of coordinates (GPS coordinates, TRS information, or other). You do not have to submit all of this information; just one will suffice, and generally the best choice is to submit a map. Furthermore, you do not have to fill out every box on the form; just fill out what seems relevant to your site visit. Remember that your name and telephone number and/or email are very important in case we have any questions about the form.

If you are concerned about the sensitivity of the site, remember that the CNDDDB can label your element occurrence "Sensitive" in the database, thus restricting access to that information.

The CNDDDB is only as good as the information in it, and we depend on people like you as the source of that information. Thank you for your help in improving the CNDDDB.

Please see also, [Instructions for Collecting Information with Global Positioning Systems for the California Natural Diversity Database](#).